

One of the first battles of the Mexican War was fought at Palo Alto, Tex., on May 8, 1846. Brig. Gen. Zachary Taylor, ordered to advance to the Rio Grande to repel a possible invasion from Mexico, built Fort Texas on the river opposite Matamoros and set up a supply base at Point Isabel. Returning to Fort Texas with 2,300 men, Taylor found his path blocked at Palo Alto by a Mexican force of 4,000 led by Gen. Mariano Arista. After several hours of fighting, the Mexicans fled. This colored lithograph, in the collection of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., records the battle. (Bridgeman/Art Resource, NY)

**Winfield Scott (1786-1866), a general of the U.S. Army, captured Mexico City during the Mexican War and directed military operations against Indian tribes. A popular hero, he was the Whig candidate for president in the 1852 election but was soundly defeated by Franklin Pierce. He is shown here in a photo by Mathew Brady. (The Bettmann Archive)**





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